

**Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee Meeting
March 20, 2003
NWIFC Conference Center
Minutes**

Attendees:

Calhoun, John	University of Washington
Clark, Jeffrey	Weyerhaeuser
Dominquez, Larry	DNR
Ehinger, Bill	DOE
Fransen, Brian	Weyerhaeuser
Glass, Domoni	Glass Environmental
Godbout, Kevin	Weyerhaeuser
Green, Matthew	DOE
Harlow, Eric	WFLC
Heide, Pete	WFPA
Hunter, Mark	WDFW
Jackson, Terry	WDFW
MacCracken, Jim	Longview Fibre
Martin, Doug	CMER Co-chair
McConnell, Steve	NWIFC
McDonald, Dennis	DNR
McFadden, George	NWIFC
McNaughton, Geoff	AMPA
Mobbs, Mark	Quinault Indian Nation
Palmquist, Bob	NWIFC
Parks, Dave	DNR
Pedterson, Pete	UCUT
Pleus, Allen	NWIFC
Price, Dave	WDFW
Pucci, Dawn	Suquamish Tribe
Quinn, Tim	WDFW
Raines, Mary	NWIFC
Risenhoover, Ken	Port Blakely
Rowe, Blake	Longview Fibre
Rowton, Heather	WFPA
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC
Smitch, Curt	Thompson Consulting
Sturhan, Nancy	DNR

Summary of Decisions and Tasks

Decision/Task	Section of Minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February minutes approved as amended McNaughton and Rowton to compile a comprehensive list of projects and forward to SAGs for input on project managers. 	Minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSAG: Type 5 Buffer Effectiveness Experimental Study treatment study approved at a cost of \$71,000. PSMWG: Request for intern to assist with Protocols and Standards Manual development approved at a cost of \$3,500. ISAG: Westside Fish Model Validation Study, Rule Tool Implementation study approved at a cost of \$80,000. SRC Review Procedure: CMER products are to go through SRC review unless the requirement is waived by CMER. 	SAG Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archives of CMER e-mails are to be available to list subscribers as part of the new CMER listserv distribution system. List managers to include: Rowton, McNaughton, and CMER co-chairs. 	New E-mail system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DNR will list rule tools and their priority for implementation and will attempt to have this information ready for the April CMER meeting. A standing agenda item will be added to the CMER agenda to discuss the status of rule tools development Please provide data requests for DNR in advance of your projects. They should be submitted to Sturhan 	Rule Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new version of the workplan will be e-mailed out during the week of March 24th with a request of SAG co-chairs for their input. 	Workplan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martin and Quinn will draft a letter to FFR policy which articulates CMER concerns raised about conducting research to test prescriptions. 	Policy Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McNaughton will approach the policy committee about the issue of funding delays. 	SAG Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMER staffing requests to be directed to either McNaughton or Schuett-Hames. 	CMER Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns and questions regarding intensive and extensive monitoring raised at the February CMER meeting will be discussed at the May CMER meeting. 	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A workshop will be scheduled for April 16th to review chapters of the handbook now available. 	Other

Minutes: February minutes were approved as amended. (See attached)

CMER decisions and most tasks from the last meeting were reviewed. Rowton suggested that other tasks from the last meeting would more appropriately be reviewed as they came up during the course of the meeting rather than taking time for them here. CMER agreed by consensus. McNaughton and Rowton will work to create a comprehensive list of CMER projects and will forward this to SAGs with a request that they list project managers where they have been identified.

Budget: McNaughton distributed the CMER budget sheet; there are no substantive changes. We do need to complete the workplan and show budget decision-makers how CMER is spending the dollars. McNaughton will be adding a line item for a CMER website as this project is moving forward. The group that originally discussed development of the CMER website will be consulted.

A short discussion about the cost of advertising ensued. Costs for advertising in the Seattle Times have increased significantly and alternate means of advertising are being used and considered, including advertising through e-mail list and posting to the DNR website. McNaughton also updated CMER that he met with UPSAG to revise and clarify the titles in the budget.

SAG Requests:

RSAG: Ehinger brought forward more information about the Type 5 Buffer Effectiveness Experimental Treatment Study. CMER requested this additional information at the February meeting. A complete list of questions addressed is available in the revised SAG request.

Rowe said that, in a meeting with DNR Monday, it was determined that currently this study is not replicable on FFR lands because the activities being considered on the sites do not conform to Forest practices rules. CMER is suffering because we do not have a research exemption. This issue was discussed in detail during the Policy issues discussion later in the day.

CMER Consensus: The \$71,000 request was approved as submitted.

PSMWG: Pleus said that the Protocols and Standards Working group is requesting \$3,500 to hire a CMER intern to help with the drafting of the Protocols and Standards Manual, specifically the dispute resolution chapter. This will be a continuation of the internship funded last quarter and the group will use the same intern, Margen Carlson. The group tried to work through the agencies to harbor this internship but it has not been

feasible. Therefore, the group is proposing to run this contract through the NWIFC which results in a sizeable indirect cost. This funding will come from the Project Development fund.

CMER Consensus: The \$3,500 request was approved as submitted.

ISAG: ISAG requested approval for the Westside Fish Model Validation Study, Rule Tool Implementation. This request was considered during the February CMER meeting and additional information was requested. The request is clearly outlined in the revised SAG request. The proposal is for up to \$80,000 to gather additional field data to enable ISAG to more accurately assess the accuracy of the model. Quinn asked what prohibits gathering this information in a GIS exercise. Fransen said that the problem is that there are not complete inventories and there are gaps. Martin said that we all agreed to field validation of the model to raise comfort levels. There is a contract in place for this and ISAG is encountering problems with that validation; they need more information. This request is to help them with that need.

CMER Consensus: The \$80,000 request was approved as submitted.

WETSAG: WETSAG requests SRC review of the Forested Wetlands Literature Review and Synthesis. During the February meeting, CMER asked for an opportunity to review the questions associated with the SRC review. Questions have been developed and are under review. WETSAG plans to complete their internal review, submit the report and questions to CMER for comment, respond to the CMER comments, and then forward the report to SRC for review.

A discussion ensued surrounding the process for SRC review and whether it is necessary for WETSAG to request SRC review, or whether it is assumed unless CMER waives the requirement.

CMER Consensus: CMER products are to go through SRC review unless the requirement is waived by CMER. Therefore, the report will be submitted to CMER for review and comment, WETSAG will revise it per CMER comments and it will then proceed to SRC pending CMER approval that it is ready for SRC review.

Confusion surrounding this request resulted because there was a request made last year by WETSAG to exempt this report from SRC review. They have since reconsidered their request and wish to now proceed through SRC review.

SRC Update: The DNR is waiting for a signed contract from the UW. McNaughton clarified: currently, the absence of a signed contract has not inhibited CMER as no documents are ready for SRC at this time.

New e-mail system: Rowton provided an update and outlined the components of the new CMER listserv. Questions were answered and the two CMER decision points were considered and decided on as noted below. If you have any additional questions about the listserv or need help accessing your options page, please contact Rowton.

CMER Consensus: CMER recommends that the archives be available to list subscribers as proposed in the accompanying memo. CMER further recommends that the list, and posts to the list, be managed by Rowton, the CMER co-chairs and the AMPA.

Rule Tool Update: Sturhan met with FP coordinators this morning to talk about rule tools. There have been no substantial changes from her report last month. Pleus said that naming of projects should be centralized so that there is consistency throughout the various publications produced.

Assignment: DNR will list the rule tools and their priority for implementation. Sturhan will attempt to have this summary ready for the April CMER meeting. Quinn asked for a science session on rule tools as well and also sessions on each individual tool to discuss why is it important to DNR and to get CMER technical input. A standing agenda item will be added to the CMER agenda to discuss the status of rule tools development.

Sturhan also took this opportunity to ask that SAG provide information about data requests that will be made to DNR in their project planning. This will help DNR with workload planning. These requests should be submitted to Sturhan.

Workplan: Martin said that last month CMER was updated that the workplan was in revision and staff would take the lead on this revision process. This will be about a two month process. Palmquist said that the last workplan that was reviewed has been cut and pasted into the present program format that we are using. During this exercise, he has determined that additional information about some projects will be necessary to complete the workplan. He is requesting SAG assistance to complete this phase.

Assignment: The new version of the workplan will be e-mailed out during the week of March 24th with a request of SAG co-chairs for their input (Palmquist has highlighted the portions where more information is needed). Schuett-Hames and Palmquist will help SAG co-chairs with this task.

Issues for Policy: Martin said that there is a policy meeting on April 8th. The following issues will be considered

- McNaughton will seek a Policy recommendation on the following CMER projects: Habitat Relationships of Dunn's and Van Dyke's Salamanders (LWAG, \$40,000); Eastside Data Collection Request (ISAG, \$200,000); Red Alder Growth and Yield Model development (RSAG, \$15,000); Type 5 Buffer Effectiveness Experimental

Treatment Study (RSAG, \$71,000); and Westside Fish Model Validation Study, Rule Tool Implementation (ISAG, \$80,000).

- LHZ – final approval for the LHZ project is to be requested at the April policy meeting. DNR and UPSAG have met and discussed this issue. DNR has formulated a proposal and for Policy.
- Water typing: ISAG needs guidance about how to balance the error and what is acceptable, and about numerous other water typing issues. McDonald said that DNR is hoping to bring forward some issues for decisions on April 8th but this has not been finalized yet.

Concerns were raised that these issues are being brought forward without CMER approval. McDonald said that he understands these issues to be related to implementation, and as such, DNR would be the proper agency to bring these issues forward for policy guidance. Smitch clarified that, with regard to rule tools, policy has clearly put DNR in charge but has also clearly indicated that DNR must work with CMER as appropriate. DNR needs to take the opportunity to utilize CMER for sharing information and discussing issues around “rule tools”, including policy issues as appropriate.

- Conducting research to test alternative prescriptions. Rowe explained that, under the current rules, DNR cannot permit activities that do not conform to either the current forest practices rules or meet the requirements of alternate plans which state that permitted activities must provide equivalent protection to the rules. If you are proposing an alternative process to the rules that can be supported as an alternate plan, then you can go through a literature review and an overview of the science to justify that the series of practices is equivalent in protection to the current rule. An alternate plan will be required for each individual site. It is not clear whether there would be one super ID team to approve all the alternate plans related to a given study or whether each individual regional office would form an ID team and review proposals.

(McConnell said that for hardwood conversion, it was recommended that there would be one team.) The problem will be when you propose practices and a clear science case cannot be made that the prescriptions are equivalent to the rules. In this case, it is likely that the alternate plan proposal would not be approved by the forest practices division. Jed Herman, DNR Forest Practices Division, is looking into this issue internally and recognizes this as a problem, in particular the potential tradeoff of possible short-term impacts balanced against the possibility of long-term benefit. McNaughton said that this is not a new issue and has been brought to policy twice. A research waiver will require a rule change that will take ~ 2 years and cost ~ \$200,000. Lenny Young (DNR Forest Practices Division Manager [not sure this is his exact title]) is planning to take this question to the FFR Policy Committee for further discussion, independent of CMER.

Rowe said that the other issue with research permits is on the federal side and the agencies have indicated that though they are involved in review and approval of the study design through the CMER process, they would still like the opportunity to review individual sites if there is a question about ESA. If there are concerns, the site would need to go through the Section 10 permitting process. A federal nexus under Section 7 also exists as a direct result of federal funding for CMER projects.

Jackson indicated that there are two distinct categories of research being conducted

and we should clearly differentiate between the two. They are 1) effectiveness of the rules and 2) alternatives to the current rules and the effectiveness of those.

Assignment: Martin and Quinn will draft a letter to FFR Policy which articulates CMER concerns about this issue and reflects issues raised during discussions today. Mobbs suggested that the co-chairs provide examples in the letter to help Policy better understand the issue.

SAG Issues:

- The PIP study will be coming up soon for CMER review. UPSAG has done some additional commenting and revising
- The fish passage issues are still under review with policy staff.
- McConnell said that he is concerned with the length of time it takes for funding to be approved by the FPB. Pleus suggested that the FFR Policy get approval from the FPB to provide interim approval for CMER work. Others around the table were supportive of this suggestion.

CMER Consensus: McNaughton was asked to approach the policy committee to discuss the issue of funding delays.

Compliance Monitoring Update: Eric Schroff provided an update on the compliance monitoring protocol development. Schroff said that if anyone has additional questions or comments or concerns, please contact him at 902-1483. DNR is in the early stages of the development of a compliance monitoring system. CMER has allocated \$60,000 to help them design this protocol. Staff has begun gathering information and a vacancy has been filled that will result in additional staff time being allocated to development of the system. Many individuals have expressed that compliance monitoring should be tied to CMER extensive monitoring. DNR will be forming a group to work on development of these protocols soon. The goal is to produce a draft framework by the end of September.

The next science topic will be amphibians.

CMER Staff: there was a BTSAG request for two weeks of Palmquist's time over the next couple of months. Dave Schuett-Hames will respond to this request. UPSAG is working on a comprehensive staffing needs assessment to accomplish their program and they will have it available within the next two months. CMER participants were reminded that staffing requests should go through McNaughton and/or Schuett-Hames and should not be made directly to CMER staff.

McConnell inquired about intensive monitoring which was to be discussed at the March CMER meeting (see February meeting notes) but was not on the agenda. Martin suggested that a logical time to have these discussions would be when the workplan draft

is completed Since the workplan is due for completion near the beginning of May, a discussion on intensive monitoring will be deferred to the May CMER meeting.

A workshop will be scheduled for April 16th to review Chapters 6 (project management) and 8 (contracting) of the CMER Protocols and Standards Manual. CMER participants will receive a draft of both Chapters by Tuesday, April 8th; at that time, comments will be requested. More information will be available in early April.